GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1517
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2006
ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES
Sarma Dr. Arun Kumar

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Government has taken opinion of scientific institution to ensure that manipulation of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) from the time of programming for each constituency and till declaration of results is not possible;

(b) If so, details thereof;

(c) The nature of complaints received so far on Electronic Voting Machines;

(d) the remedial measure taken in this regard; and

(e) the details of developed countries which are not using EVM in the electoral process?

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No.1517 for reply on 4th August, 2006.

(a) and (b): The matter regarding the use of Electronic Voting Machines was referred by the Government to the Electoral Reforms Committee, appointed by the Government in 1990 consisting of representatives of several recognised national and state parties. The machines were demonstrated before that Committee and though that Committee was satisfied about their functioning, they, in turn, appointed another technical Expert Committee for technical evaluation of the machines. The Technical Committee comprising Prof. S. Sampath, Prof. PV Indresan and Dr. C. Rao Kasarbada examined the machines minutely from all technical angles and unanimously recommended the use of Electronic Voting Machines without further loss of time.

(c): The Election Commission has intimated that the nature of complaints received so far on Electronic Voting Machines is as follows:-

(i) Technical defects

(ii) Mishandling

(iii) Button, Switch, Cable and Light/Lamp problem

(iv) No display/Memory failure

(v) Battery failure

(vi) Beep sound problem

(d): The Election Commission has intimated that the remedial measures taken in this regard are as follows:-

(i) Before elections, First Level Checks are made by the manufacturing firms of the Electronic Voting Machines, i.e. M/s Electronics Corporation of India Limited, Hyderabad and M/s Bharat Electronics Limited, Bangalore to trace out the defects. The defects are then removed or the Electronic Voting Machines which are not easily repairable are kept separately and not used.

(ii) Electronic Voting Machines which develop problems during poll, are replaced by new one.

(iii) Auxiliary Display Units are used to retrieve the results from Electronic Voting Machines in case of no display/Memory failure.

(iv) The manufacturing firms do diagnostic tests of the Electronic Voting Machines with the above defects after the elections to find reasons behind such failures.

(v) Comprehensive Training on use of Electronic Voting Machines is conducted by the Commission from time to time before the elections to reduce mishandling by the polling personnel.

(e): The Election Commission has intimated that the details of developed countries which are not using Electronic Voting Machines in the electoral process is not available.